

THE GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND.

How the Act of Union was Carried.

Since the Irish people were firmly and unalterably opposed to the Act of Union, projected in 1799, the Government of Pitt determined to carry the Act by wholesale bribery, an unwilling instrument of which was found in the person of the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Cornwallis, and to dismiss all those honest officials who, being opposed to it, could not be induced to sell their country's liberty for gold.

Pitt's own Suggestion.

"It seems very desirable, if Government is strong enough to do it without too much immediate hazard, to mark by dismissal the sense entertained of the conduct of those persons in office who opposed."—*Letter to Cornwallis, January 26th, 1799.*

Corruption of the Press.

"We cannot give that activity to the Press which is requisite. We have good materials amongst the young barristers, but we cannot expect them to waste their time and starve into the bargain. I know the difficulties, and shall respect them as much as possible, in the extent of our expenditure; but notwithstanding every difficulty, I cannot help most earnestly requesting to receive £5,000 in bank-notes by the first messenger."—*Viscount Castlereagh to W. Wickham.*

The Spoils to the Victors.

A meeting of members of the Bar was held in Dublin in December, 1798, when 33 favoured union, of whom 26 received, subsequently, appointments as judges, commissioners, and Custom House officials. One of these persons—W. Longfield—was appointed commissioner to distribute the bribes to the Irish Parliament.

The holders of the following offices were all dismissed because they were opposed to the Act of Union, and servile followers of the Tory Government were put in the vacant places:—

Four Commissioners of Revenue ...	at £1,000	per annum.
One Provost of Trinity College ...	at £2,300	"
Secretary of the Treasury ...	at £1,000	"

Surveyor of Ordnance	...	...	at	£800	per annum.
Commissioner of Accounts	...	...	at	£800	"
Collector of Dublin Excise	...	...	at	£1,200	"
Collector of Port of Dublin	...	...	at	£1,200	"
Collector of Wexford	...	...	at	£700	"
Cursitor in Chancery	...	...	at	£500	"
Clerk of the Entries	...	...	at	£500	"
Inspector-General of Exports and Imports	...	...	at	£400	"
Treasurer to Catholic College	...	...	at	£300	"
Two Members of Barrack Board,	each	...	at	£400	"

Distribution of the Bribery Money.

Castlereagh considered that £1,500,000 would be the necessary sum for purposes of bribery. The sum actually expended was £1,260,000. There were 80 boroughs, with 103 borough seats in the Irish Parliament, belonging to patrons. The following are amongst the sums that were paid, many in hard cash, in return for a vote or votes for the Act of Union:—

Lord Downshire, £52,500; Lord Ely, £45,000; Earl of Carrick, £14,350; Lord Clanmorris, £14,000; Sir Hercules Langrishe, £13,862; Duke of Leinster, £13,800; Lord Lismore, £12,300; Earl of Ludlow, £7,500; Earl of Shannon, £7,500; Lord Tara, £7,500; Hon. E. Massey, £6,850; Earl of Massareene and his three brothers, each £3,750.

"Anxious to Send the Needful."

"I have seen the Duke of Portland and Mr. Pitt a second time. The Duke is anxious to send you the needful. Mr. Pitt was equally disposed, but fears it is impossible to the extent. He will continue to let you have from £8,000 to £10,000 for five years."—*E. Cooke to Lord Castlereagh, April 5th, 1800.*

Disgust of Lord Cornwallis.

"You will easily conceive how unpleasant my situation must be, and how little I can flatter myself with the hopes of obtaining any credit for myself, or of rendering any essential service to my country. Sincerely do I repent that I did not return to Bengal."—*Letter to Bishop of Lichfield, April 27th, 1799.*

"My occupation is now of the most unpleasant nature, negotiating and jobbing with the most corrupt people under Heaven. I despise and hate myself every hour for engaging in such dirty work."—*Letter to Major-General Ross, June 8th, 1799.*

Can a settlement thus corruptly forced on Ireland be respected by either the English or the Irish people?